models of Transreceivers and their accessories were concluded in July' 1999 for a period of one year i.e. upto 21st July' 2000 except for Scrambler/secrecy models. Subequently, on clearance of these models by concerned organization, these were also brought on Rate Contract along with other models. The Rate Contract has already been approved for extension by one month.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Decline in the Export of Automobiles

† 2343. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the export of automobilies has declined during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to bring improvement in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The decline in the export of automobiles is mainly due to the economic situation in major markets like East and South East Asia and Africa, as well as currency devaluation by competitors such as South Korea. In addition, the global recession in the automobile sector has contributed to the negative trend of exports.

(c) There is no exclusive scheme for promotion of exports of automobiles. However, promotion of exports of automobiles, like other items in the Engineering *Sector,* has been the constant endeavour of the Government. Measures being provided to boost exports of engineering goods including automobiles consist of various provisions under the Export-Import Policy including Duty Exemption Schme, Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme, Duty Drawback

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

Scheme, Exemption under Section 80 HHC of Income Tax Act, Assistance from Market Development Fund etc. Engineering Goods exporters also receive promotional support through various activities of the engineering Export Promotional Council.

Herbs patented by India

† 2344. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of those herbs which have been got patented by India;

(b) what arc the names of thoSe herbs which have not been got patented; and

(c) what are the reasons for not getting the same patented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (c) In order to be patentable an invention has to satisfy the criteria of patentability, namely, novelty, inventiveness and industrial applicability. Herbs being in public domain are not patentable per se. Only processes for extracting chemicals and new formulations using herbs, are patentable, subject to fulfillment of patentability criteria, as per the patents law of the country concerned. Indian agencies have also reportedly obtained such process patents. Such data is not centrally maintained.

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.